



NEWS photo Cindy Goodman

THE Capilano College Blues men's basketball team captured its first B.C. Colleges Athletics Association gold medal in 19 years with an 88-65 win over the University College of the Cariboo Sun Demons on Saturday night at Douglas College in New Westminster. Former Kitsilano Blue Demon Chris Porteous and former Argyle Piper Tim Pershick were named to the tournament all-star team, while Duchess Park import Jordan Yu was named the MVP. The team now will head to the CCAA (Canadian Colleges Athletics Association) national championships being held in Longueuil, Quebec starting March 19. The last time Capilano College won a provincial title in men's basketball was back in 1984, when the school went on to finish fourth at the nationals.

Gold rush

Blues bomb UCC to win first B.C. men's basketball gold since '84

Jan-Christian Sorensen

jsorensen@nsnews.com

CALL 'em the golden boys of Capilano College.

The school's Blues men's basketball team captured the B.C. Colleges Athletics Association provincial title on the weekend at Douglas College with an 88-65 win over the University College of the Cariboo Sun Demons. The team now advances to the Canadian Colleges Athletics Association national championships, being held next week in Longueuil, Que.

It's the school's first B.C. title since 1984, when the college's cagers finished up with a fourth-place end at the nats.

Cap coach Paul Eberhardt said that he knew he had a solid squad on his hands, but wasn't certain they would be able to improve on their fifth-place B.C. ranking by winning the provincial title.

This season the team lost the services of both their

starting forwards — former Handsworth Royal Ryan Lenarduzzi to a serious head injury and McNair import Charles Jacoway to academic ineligibility — as well as Saint John, N.B. guard Ryan Buchanan and were only 4-4 after the first half. However, the team added Austrian import Lukas Hrdlicka to the mix, Kitsilano import Chris Porteous caught fire to win the BCCAA rookie of the year award and the team went on a 7-3 run in the second half to scape its way into the postseason picture.

At the playoffs the team staged a big quarter-final win over the Kwantlen University College Eagles 80-63 before advancing to the semi-final, where they dispatched the two-time defending national champs from the University College of the Fraser Valley 75-67 to reach the final.

Eberhardt said that because many of the teams at the provincials seemed to regard Cap as the underdog,

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Vidic makes a difference

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it gave his team a definite edge.

"I don't think people have taken us seriously all year," said Eberhardt. "People know we're a good team and that we're capable of beating people but I don't really think, when it came right down to it, that they thought we could. All that counts is that we thought we could. Our guys had no doubt that they were capable of beating everybody. I didn't have to do a sales job or motivate them. They knew they could do it.

"I believed we could do it but to say I was expecting it would be a lie. Going in as the number-five seed and having no big guys I knew it would be difficult, but I also knew at the same time we had beaten everybody at least once so there was nobody we were afraid of."

Cap guard and Duchess Park alum Jordan Yu was named the tournament MVP while Porteous and former Argyle Piper Tim Pershick were named to the all-star team.

In terms of scoring, Vlade Vidic led the way in the Kwantlen game with 19 points and five boards, while Porteous was good for 17 points, nine rebounds and four assists and former Sutherland Sabre Scott Lawson chipped in with 14 points, six rebounds and five assists.

In the semi-final game Porteous scored 17 points and three assists while Jordan Yu — who was in all three tilts named player of the game — scored 16 points, 10 assists and three steals. In the final game it was the Chris Porteous show — the big forward scored 33 points (including six threes) and added five each of assists and steals. Yu chipped in with 23 points, eight assists and six steals.

Eberhardt sang the praises of University Hill grad and sixth man Vlade Vidic, who helped pace the team to a 3-0 record with solid play off the bench.

"He played the best basketball of his career," said Eberhardt. "Being such a short bench if we got in any

foul trouble or guys were tired, Vlade would come in. He was averaging only four of five points a game before but at the provincials he scored 19, 14 and eight for us in three games and defensively he was great. He came off the bench and I don't think a lot of people noticed him but people who know the game really appreciated what a difference he made for us."

Eberhardt said the one factor that drove his team was heart. Earlier this season he tried to illustrate how important that quality was to his charges by showing them a scene from the classic Paul Newman film *Cool Hand Luke*.

It's the jailyard fight scene where George Kennedy's Dragline lays a beating on Newman's *Cool Hand* character. Despite a savage thrashing, Newman refuses to stay down, saying "you're gonna have to kill me first."

"Six or seven weeks ago I didn't feel we were playing as hard as we could. When you talk to a team about the heart it needs to win, it's a hard concept to describe. Newman keeps getting up. He won't stay down. I showed it to the guys and they were mesmerized by that "you'll have to kill me first" scene. That sort of became our theme. After that, before every game we'd write that on the board as a reminder to the guys to leave it all on the floor and give it all you have and it became our battle cry."

Eberhardt said that whatever happens at the nationals, this year's run has been one of the major benchmarks of his coaching career.

"If we don't win it I still think I will look back on this year and say this is one of the most enjoyable and satisfying years in terms of overachieving. My goal when I came here was to get to nationals and win a championship and there were a lot of people that didn't think it could happen. Cap had no history of success in basketball, it's fairly isolated and most people saw it as only a soccer school.

"Sure, there were times when I was wondering what I was doing. (Going to nationals) within four years is certainly way ahead of what I was expecting."